MANY FARMERS ARE Protectionists.

EVIDENCE presented before the Tariff Commission indicates that there is a large and influential body of farmer opinion in favour of the principle of adequate protection for Canadian industry, including agriculture.

It is somewhat carelessly assumed in some quarters that the manufacturers and farmers of Canada are sharply divided on the Tariff question, the manufacturers as a class supporting protection and the farmers as a class advocating Free Trade or at least a substantial reduction in the Tariff.

The evidence presented before the Tariff Commission during its tour of investigation affords convincing proof that this is not the case.

Let us first summarize the evidence submitted by farmers or their organizations in favor of Free Trade or tariff reductions. The Canadian Council of Agriculture presented its official policy advocating that the Canadian Customs Tariff be amended as follows:

1. By an immediate and substantial all-round reduction of the customs tariff.

2. By reducing the customs duty on goods imported from Great Britain to one-half the rates charged under the general tariff, and that further gradual, uniform reductions be made in the remaining tariff on British imports that will ensure complete Free Trade between Great Britain and Canada in five years.

3. By endeavouring to secure unrestricted reciprocal trade in natural products with the United States along the lines of the Reciprocity Agreement of 1911.

4. By placing all foodstuffs on the free list.

5. That agricultural implements, farm and household machinery, vehicles, fertilizers, coal, lumber, cement, gasoline, illuminating fuel, and

lubricating oils be placed on the free list, and that all raw materials and machinery used in their manufacture also be placed on the free list.

This policy was endorsed by those provincial organizations of farmers which are affiliated with the Canadian Council of Agriculture in practically every province with the exception of British Columbia. The above constituted the demands made by farmers and their organizations in favor of free trade and tariff reduction.

EVIDENCE OF PROTECTIONIST FARMERS.

In nearly all the Provinces strong evidence was presented by farmers and organizations of farmers, in support of the protective system, and opposing the policy of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

This evidence is summarized from the official verbatim report of the Tariff Commission proceedings.

At Vancouver, B.C., on September 21st, Mr. J. N. Barry, Prairie, B.C., president of the Fraser Valley Milk Producers' Association, indicated that this Association was in a position to speak for the whole of the dairy industry in British Columbia. He declared that—"our farmers regardless of politics or otherwise, would feel that the protection we have at the present time in regard to the different lines connected with our products is necessary for the continuance of our business."

FRUIT GROWERS FAVOR PROTECTION.

Appearing also at the Vancouver hearing, Joseph Arnold, representing the fruit growers, and more especially the apple growers of the Fraser Valley, told how serious would be the result to them if protection was withdrawn and expressed the hope that no change would be made in the present duty.

At Vernon, B.C., on September 27th, W. F. Laidman appeared on behalf of the B.C. Fruit Growers' Association, which he explained was an organization thoroughly representative of the fruit growers of the province, and gave reasons why the retention of a sufficient duty on fruit was essential to the continued success of the fruit growing industry. "If the tariff was removed," declared Mr. Laidman "it would be the ruin of the fruit industry in British Columbia, which would not only be a calamity for the thousands connected with it, but also for this province which has always encouraged the expansion of this industry as a profitable one to the investor."

At the same hearing, R. M. Winslow presented a statistical statement, prepared under instructions of the Executive of the B.C. Fruit Growers' Association, which gave a most thorough description of the extent and operation of the fruit growing industry with a view to showing that the retention of protection on the present scale was warranted.

DANGER TO SEED-GROWING INDUSTRY.

L. E. Taylor, speaking on behalf of the seed growing industry of the province, which had received encouragement from the Dominion Government and was specially adapted to the province, declared that the continent was going to be flooded with cheap seeds from Germany and asked for protection for the growers of mangold, beet and carrot seeds.

The United Farmers of British Columbia conceded the need for protection and at Vernon endorsed the resolution passed by the Fruit Growers Executive on August 17th, asking for the retention of a sufficient duty on fruit as a protection against dumping. Further it was admitted in their brief, which was presented by Mr. Laidman, that "it is inconsistent to demand protection on the particular commodity in which a community or an association is interested in producing, and free trade in machinery, etc., necessary for such production."

Thomas Bulman, who also appeared at Vernon on behalf of the United Farmers of British Columbia, was quite outspoken in his views. "If we are denied a complete measure of protection," he said, "the American fruit grower will be much less capable than we know him to be if he does not capture our business. If you take a census of the Okanagan Valley today, I am sure you will find from 75 to 80 per cent are returned men or their relatives. Consequently it is inconceivable to my mind that the Government, to satisfy a few prairie farmers, should interfere with the commercial prosperity of the district like this that has exhibited such a fine patriotic and self-sacrificing spirit during that critical time when our national existence was imperilled."

Again at Nelson, B.C., on September 30th, J. J. Campbell, managing director of the Willow Point Fruit Growers' Association, appeared on behalf of a number of co-operative fruit growing associations in the district and gave his hearty endorsation to the memorandum of the B.C. Fruit Growers' Association. During his evidence, Mr. Campbell remarked—"I may say that all growers on both sides of politics with whom I have discussed the matter prefer the maintenance of the conditions we now have as far as the general protection policy is concerned."

Supporting this view, E. Norman, manager of the Kootenay Fruit Growers' United, Limited, also endorsed the brief of the B.C. Fruit Growers' Association.

Throughout the prairie provinces, the organized farmers were in the majority but here and there an independent voice was heard, indicating that the views of the Canadian Council of Agriculture were by no means acceptable to all western farmers. A notable instance of this was given at Regina on October 11th, when William L. Ramsay of Bladworth, Sask., a farmer of sixteen years standing, gave evidence.

AN IDEAL POLICY FOR AN IDEAL WORLD.

Mr. Ramsay made several strong points, as for example—"A nation that is dependent for essentials on a foreign country is a dependdent people and at the mercy of those who have." "Would it be well to abandon a tried and proven policy in favor of a chimera favored by those who claim to speak with authority but are without experience or responsibility?" "Free Trade is the ideal policy for an ideal world, so is disarmament, but the first to accept such policy is the first to fall." "There are a great many protectionists in the West."

Another western farmer, James Weir, M.P.P., speaking at Edmonton, voiced an entirely independent opinion, and, while criticizing some aspects of protection, declared that he was not going to throw Canadian manufacturers up against 110,000,000 of the most intensely skilled and commercialized people in the world. "I meet farmers under all sorts of circumstances," said he, "but I have never heard one farmer in this province in his sane moments get up and advocate free trade by the instantaneous or any other process."

MARITIME FARMERS AND PROTECTION.

That all farmers in the Maritime Provinces are not opponents of protection was apparent from the evidence of Mr. A. E. Trites, a farmer living about twelve miles west of Moncton, N.B., "Representing, to a certain extent, the farming industry of New Brunswick," Mr. Trites presented his views on the tariff at Moncton on November 10th. He stressed strongly the importance of the home market and declared that "no changes should be made in the Customs Tariff which will in any way adversely affect the manufacturing industries which are developing our local market."

The value of the home market was also emphasized at Three Rivers by Mr. J. M. Garceau, operating a dairy farm about a mile from the city, who stated that the financial position of the farmers was very much better now than it was ten years ago; that farm values had increased considerably and that the change was directly attributed to the industrial development of Three Rivers.

WHAT MARKET GARDENERS DESIRE.

Appearing at the Montreal hearing on November 15th, Mr. Albert Monette, president of the Association of Market Gardeners of the Province of Quebec, gave reasons why there should be a protctive tariff on farm products and presented a resolution, passed by the Association, to this effect.

Jack McAvoy, also appeared on behalf of this Association, and explained that it had a membership of over 2,000, while there were 3,000 market gardeners in the vicinity of Montreal. "As an inducement for us to remain in our present business," he declared, "we must have

the guarantee of our home market against heavy shipments which might be made from the United States in periods of over-production there." Further he said, "We realize that the presence of industrial workers in Montreal is essential to our existence."

That the industrial growth and prosperity of the town of Valleyfield meant much to the farmers in the surrounding country was the testimony of D. D. McBain. He told how the farmers found a good market for all their produce in Valleyfield and how they were getting rich from it. "As far as the duty on farming implements is concerned," said Mr. McBain, "we do not consider that of any account to us at all. We pay for our implements and have the best."

FREE TRADE WOULD DESTROY FRUIT INDUSTRY.

Throughout the province of Ontario, farmer evidence was very largely protectionist in tone. Thus at the Hamilton hearing on November 26th, Col. Gregory, residing 3½ miles west of St. Catharines, gave it as his belief that "if the duty were removed on domestic fruit it would very likely destroy the fruit industry in this district."

At the same hearing, John H. Day, Brantford Township, declared that "as a farmer perhaps I stand out somewhat alone these days in supporting the policy of protection but I believe that many of those who are following or pretending to follow the hue and cry of free trade are consciously hoping that they may fail and that the policy which has made for success in the development of this country be maintained," etc.

EVIDENCE OF PROTECTIONIST FARMERS.

The protective principle was likewise supported by William Eagleshma, farmer Flamboro. Township, near Dunnville.

Another protectionist farmer to appear at this hearing was Robert Atkins, who farms four miles from Paris. He remarked that "Although I have heard a great deal here today about the tariff, I have never heard anyone speak against it and I begin to think it must be a good thing."

At the Hamilton hearing on November 27th, James A. Livingstone fruit grower, Grimsby, and John B. Bridgeman, also a fruit grower, advocated protection for the fruit growing industry of the Niagara District.

Representing the farmers around Aylmer, G. H. Skinner, attributed the prosperity of the farmers very largely to the tariff and said that he believed the tariff was good for the farmer.

PROTECTION BENEFITS THE FARMER.

S. J. Montieth, farmer, living near Stratford, said that his observation had led him to believe that the protective policy, as now in opera-

tion, had been a benefit to the farming industry and that the maintenance of some such policy was essential to the continuance of the prosperity enjoyed.

Similar opinions were expressed at the London hearing by John Dunbar, owner of a 300 acre farm near St. Mary's, who said that he felt it would be a most inopportune time to lower the tariff on any articles.

At Windsor on November 30th, the tobacco growers, represented by M. H. Swatman, Leamington; John Caughill, Robert Macdonald and Alexander James, appeared before the Commission to advocate a higher import duty on tobacco leaf coming into Canada as a protection to the Canadian tobacco growing industry. General farmers were represented by Judson Scratch, who declared that protection on hogs was proving a benefit and R. D. Porter, who supported the home market and said that he believed industries needed protection to make them successful.

EVERYONE SATISFIED WITH THE TARIFF.

The first farmer witness at the Toronto hearings was James R. Fallis, Brampton, Mr. Fallis said that he was anxious that the industries of Brampton should be kept going. The manufacturers created a market and "thus every person is pretty well satisfied in our district regarding the tariff."

Speaking for the farmers of the Lindsay district, Thomas Hickson declared that the farmers in the locality were well satisfied. "If we kill our manufacturers," said he, "we certainly kill our towns and, if we kill our towns, we certainly hurt ourselves as farmers."

Another Ontario farmer to adopt a similar attitude was W. C. Shaw, Hespeler, who said that the farmers in that part of the country realized the benefit of industries to themselves as farmers and would not like to see the protective tariff reduced in such a way as to hamper industries.

INCREASE RATHER THAN DECREASE THE TARIFF.

L. A. Hamilton, who has been farming near Oakville for the last eighteen years, said that he thought he could speak for the farmers of the district as a unit because "when the Reciprocity Treaty was before us a great many of the fruit growers there felt that the passage of that Treaty would put their industry in a position of very serious danger." Mr. Hamilton thought that the time had come for an increase rather than a decrease in the tariff.

At the Toronto hearing were present F. S. Reeves, Thos. Delworth and George B. Helleman, representing the Ontario Vegetable Growers' Association, who showed that business had been built up under the tariff. Similar evidence was given by J. E. Brethow on behalf of the Canadian Swine Breeders' Association, this gentleman stating that the

bacon industry of Canada would be in a most precarious position if the present protection were removed.

Again at Kingston on December 20th, W. W. Anderson speaking on behalf of the farmers of Prince Edward County, declared that "the majority of our agriculturists want a protective tariff in order to stimulate their market."

The foregoing analysis shows clearly that the assumption that the farmers and manufacturers are divided into two opposing classes in the tariff question is untrue. On the contrary, as this summary of evidence proves, many influential farmers organizations and individual farmers representing practically all the various branches of agriculture, are strong supporters of the policy of maintaining adequate protection for agriculture and all other Canadian industries.

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